

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST

Vol. 19, No. 32

TORONTO 2, CANADA

December 10th, 1927

FACTS

about "The Student Prince in
Old Heidelberg"

- 1 ERNST LUBITSCH**—The genius who gave the world "Passion," "Lady Windermere's Fan" and other fine pictures has directed a masterpiece for all time.
- 2 RAMON NOVARRO** — The star who is thrilling all America today in "Ben Hur" gives a performance that will win him more followers than ever.
- 3 NORMA SHEARER**—The most romantic role in the career of this wholesome beauty who is truly today's idol.
- 4 THE STUDENT PRINCE**—If there is a legitimate theatre in your town "The Student Prince" has played there.
- 5 OLD HEIDELBERG**—A name that breathes romance. The locale of the world-famed love story. Actually shown in a feature for the first time.
- 6 BROADWAY TRIUMPH**—In its third month at the Astor Theatre, N.Y., at \$2.00 admission, it is the outstanding road-show picture of the day.

METRO-GOLDWYN  AYER

PUBLISHED BY
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RAY LEWIS

Editor and Managing Director

GEORGE C. WILLIAMS

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"The Boob of the Arts"

HEYWOOD BROWN states that he likes "the movies" and thinks they are "swell."

Heywood Brown should get a following for his opinions. His versatility as a journalist and critic has covered the field of the drama, motion pictures, sports, literature; and his recent defence of Sacco and Vanzetti, whose seven year fight for freedom ended in their execution; a defence which lost for Brown his position with the New York World, won for him the admiration of all freedom and justice loving people.

Now there is George Jean Nathan, looked upon by many as the authoritative critic of the drama. His journal, "The American Mercury," aided by the prolific pen of H. L. Mencken has been most caustic in its criticism and condemnation of that "Boob of the Arts," Motion Pictures.

Here are two men, who must be admitted into the classification of the intelligentsia, newspaper men, worldly-wise, men who know their Arts and Letters, who possess enviable reputations in the world of Journalism, absolutely disagreeing on the subject of Motion Pictures.

Heywood Brown states, "Motion Pictures have an advantage over the stage in the direction of realism. They can show scenes of natural grandeur, for example in a way that the stage can never hope to rival. Illusion is another problem that the Movies can handle, and spectacles on a great scale."

Brown further states, "There is no denying the importance of pictures, millions of people get their ideas from pictures; and I should place the influence of the movies in this country as second only to that of the newspaper."

Nathan contradicts as follows, "I cannot see that the movies have any influence worth mentioning, except in teaching women how to dress (usually very badly) exaggerating the importance of romantic love, and, like the newspapers, reducing the general degree of intelligence."

"The Movies have absolutely nothing to do with ideas. They have no ideas. They are in the main in the hands of cheap people. There isn't half of one per cent of mind among all the Motion Picture magnates. If you gathered all the heads of the Motion Picture Industry into one room and mentioned any subject, however simple, that the ordinary college sophomore might recognize, there would not be a gleam of recognition from any of them."

In the November issue of Cinema Art, you have Heywood Brown's Motion Picture analysis and George Jean Nathan's given in their entirety; and from which articles we are indebted for the quoted excerpts. Brown



RAY LEWIS

opens a Freudian field of emotional and psychical complexes for Motion Pictures, Nathan strips the screen leaving it barren, sterile of any ideas, and refers to psychology in Motion Pictures as "Buncombe," removing the screen from the field of photographing the inner workings of man's mind. In other words, Motion Pictures, according to Nathan, are mentally unfit.

To Brown we have possibilities, to Nathan we are an "abysmal stupidity," and the worst mistake we have ever made was in being born."

Considering the world interest, Governmental and financial, which Motion Pictures has aroused, considering the report of the License Commissioner of New York which estimates that 1,500,000 people patronize theatres and picture palaces of New York every day; and that the greater percentage of this attendance is directed toward Motion Pictures. Taking into consideration that New York is but one city in a world of cities, which pyramid the Motion Picture attendance around the world into almost uncountable millions annually, there must be a world of people who disagree with George Jean Nathan, who would say Heywood Brown has the right idea regarding Motion Pictures.

Certain Financial and Banking Interests governing the World of Politics, Trade, Commerce, International Treaties, diplomatic entente cordiales are financially interested in Motion Pictures, they are on the Board of Directors of our Motion Picture Companies, and yet our Picture Magnates trained only in the business of being showmen, still control the destiny of the enterprises which they have nursed to its present proportions.

This requires shrewdness, business foresight, tenacity, the spirit of adventure which makes possible gigantic mergers, a knowledge of world events, elements which make up the substance called Brain Stuff; the material which has throughout all civilizations patronized Art, to its commercialization possibly, but by this trade in Art made it possible for Art to live.

For of what benefit to the world is a light under a bushel? That which dispels darkness is "the Light that lighteth the world," and no one in weighing values discounts The Sermon on The Mount because The Preacher was born in a manger. The result, is the basis upon which we form our judgment of Motion Pictures; and even if our Motion Picture magnates had only the brain capacity of a flea, what does it matter when Motion Pictures encompass the whole world of Arts and Letters in what it offers to the public.

Ray Lewis

Ray Presents

THERE is more talk of a new big theatre, now the site is Temperance Street which is to be turned into "The Rue De La Paix" of Toronto. Theatre to seat 3,800, fashionable and smart shops, drive in after the fashion of Covent Garden, London, attendant to park your cars, very much De Luxe and Oo La! La!

Fox or United Artists said to be in the deal, maybe? Publicity cites Famous Players Canadian Corp. monopoly and the need of an Independent theatre.

EMPIRE THEATRE, owned by Mrs. Stair, now playing repertoire stock, included in the deal, in fact the building plans take in so much property, and so much territory, so gigantic a building plan, that the Mining Boom has, for the time, been put in the shade; and if the programme goes through, prepare to see Toronto, a Metropolis as it were over-night.

If the producers get rid of the "Road-Show Bug" and reserve their big pictures; which are "few and far between," for their regular picture first run houses, showing the "regulars" that they can give them a big picture show, where the picture is "It," the only way to meet the overhead will be in capacity.

JOSEPH SCHENCK is decrying the 5,000 seat house with their "Ritzy" presentations and overhead, theatres which are making the picture in the scheme of presentation, "an also ran" on the bill; and defeating the very purpose for which the Industry of Motion Pictures was created.

It sounds as if Mr. Schenck was talking sense. The "centre of the stage," as it were, must be the picture; and it has been proved, that despite the "Soup to Nuts" programme which big theatres present, when the picture "flops" the box-office receipts take a downward leap also.

THIS demonstrates that the money is in the picture; and that a good deal of the other overhead could be placed on the debit side as profits, if our picture showmen would only take hold of themselves; and cease trying to beat the other fellow by spending more money. If there is any great effort to be made let it be expended in the making and getting of good pictures. Personally I would rather see a good short subject than a moderately good act. I have seen short

comedies and News Reels that have been furnished at 25% the cost of an act, provide 100% more entertainment.

Last week the Uptown presented an Educational Big Boy comedy. It was simon pure entertainment all the way through; and the Educational comedy, "Red Hot Bullets," at the Tivoli this week, presented in conjunction with "The Battle of the Somme," furnishes the only laughs in the show, plenty of them; and saves the situation on entertainment.

THIS WEEK at the Uptown there is a Hal Roach comedy, "Chicken Feed." Talk about a vaudeville team being funny, it would take a company of first class vaudevillians to hand out the laughs which "The Gang" handed out. If I was a showman, "The Gang" would get big type billing in my house. They certainly have become box-office!

Jack Fuld back in Toronto after driving the chariot of "Ben-Hur" successfully through the press of many cities. Great business everywhere states Jack and everybody happy. The Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Lion roaring its way through Canada as a box-office mascot.

"Mademoiselle From Armentieres O.B.E."

Regal to Release "Mademoiselle" in Canada.

So great was the success of "Mademoiselle From Armentieres," a British Gaumont release, that exhibitors all over the country have preferred to provide "Mademoiselle" with some new adventures and she will therefore make her re-appearance on the screen as "Mademoiselle From Armentieres O.B.E."

Contracts were recently signed on Thursday and Friday for Estelle Brody ("Mademoiselle"), John Stuart ("John"), and Alf Goddard ("Fred") the three principal players in "Mademoiselle From Armentieres," to appear in the new film, which I understand, is to be romantic melodrama and has already been provided with a story even more exciting in character than its predecessor.

Active preparations are already going forward on the production and the cameras will start turning very soon after Christmas.

Four Runs Ottawa For Famous "Beau Geste"

"Beau Geste" played its third Ottawa run at the Imperial Theatre recently and having its fourth run in the Canadian Capital at the Princess Theatre.

SHORT TALKS ON SHORT FEATURES

A Profit-Scoring Team of Short Feature Stars

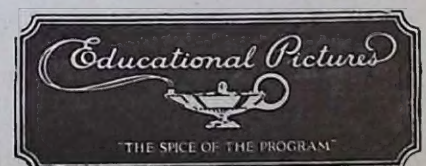
When the lights go off and your show begins, you're carrying the ball! And you've got a line to buck! A line of mighty stiff competition.

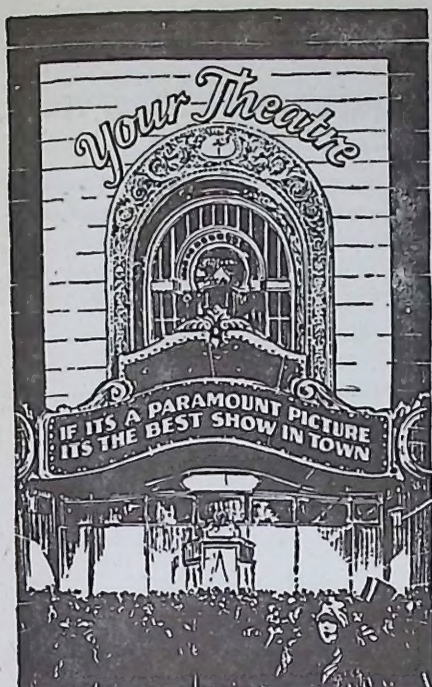
The high speed at which we live today calls for a fast-action program to hold the interest of your patrons. You've got to beat Monotony. You've got to chase Gloom. Nothing but the very best all along the line. . . . Short Subjects as well as the longer features . . . will do this . . . will get the cheering sections going. But you've licked 'em all when you've signed up the Educational Pictures team to play on your side.

Line 'em up to-day . . . this profit-sharing team of Short Feature stars. Line 'em up for you . . . for bigger crowds . . . for larger gate receipts. They'll carry your colors across the chalk-lines of higher attendance . . . to the touchdown of bigger money.



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FILMS LIMITED





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with its thrilling climax, the fren-

zied stampede of a herd of elephants, is a Paramount

Picture. So is "THE ROUGH RIDERS". And that won-

derful story of brotherly love, "BEAU GESTE".



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glimpse into tomorrow's universe. "THE WAY OF ALL FLESH" in which Emil Jannings



gives such a marvelous performance. "JESSE JAMES", "FIREMEN, SAVE MY

CHILD", "SWIM, GIRL, SWIM", "TELL IT TO SWEENEY", "A GENTLEMAN OF PARIS". The

seething drama of gangster warfare, "UNDERWORLD",



"FIGURES DON'T LIE",

"SHANGHAI BOUND" are Paramount Pictures, too. Clara Bow in "HULA" and "GET YOUR

MAN".



Pola Negri



in "BARBED WIRE" and "THE WOMAN ON TRIAL".

Paramount! Paramount! Paramount! No wonder so many people think *all* the good pictures

are Paramount! And they are not so far wrong either—at least all *Paramount* Pictures are good

pictures! And they will be still better tomorrow when you are seeing "GENTLEMEN PREFER

BLONDES".



HAROLD LLOYD, "BEAU SABREUR" and all the others.



Theatre Decoration

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Roman Catholic Church Condemns Sunday Shows

More or less of a bomb was thrown into the ranks of exhibitors in the Province of Quebec and a section of Eastern Ontario when the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church issued a pastoral letter, signed by 17 archbishops and bishops of the various ecclesiastical provinces of Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa, condemning Sunday shows and calling upon the faithful to refrain from attending picture performances held on Sundays and Holy Days.

The letter was read in all Roman Catholic churches at various services and adherents of the faith were instructed to avail themselves of all lawful means to banish Sunday performances. The edict went into effect Sunday, December 4, in many cities, including Montreal, Quebec City, Hull, Three Rivers, Sherbrook, Lachine and other places where Sunday shows have been the rule and not the exception. The pastoral letter follows closely upon the conviction of the proprietor and two employees of the Laurier Palace Theatre, Montreal, where a disastrous fire took place during a Sunday performance, and also after the Montreal civic administration had dismissed two prominent local officials for alleged laxity in enforcing the laws.

There are a great many Roman Catholics throughout Quebec Province and the ecclesiastical order may have far-reaching effect. The warning is issued that Roman Catholics "are bound under grave obligation to abstain from all organizations of a commercial or lucrative nature on Sundays and Holy Days" and they are forbidden to take part in any such amusements for which an admission fee is charged, even though the revenue is for charity or religious purposes. The letter says in part:

"Theatrical and cinema performances, by their number and characteristic of financial and industrial operations, constitute nowadays a real

profanation of the Lord's Day which cannot be tolerated by Roman Catholic ideals. Neglect, on our part, to condemn them and to insist upon their closing on Sundays and Holy Days would be a cause of scandal and disedifying to those who do not share our beliefs."

Ambrose Small Shrine In Grand Opera Site

The Grand Opera House, owned by Ambrose Small, millionaire theatre magnate, who mysteriously disappeared eight years ago, after putting through a million dollar deal with Trans-Canada Theatre, Limited, is to be demolished, and on the property a 900 room hotel is to be erected, including a chapel dedicated to the memory of the missing millionaire.

The theatre is rich in histrionic history. First opened in 1874 by Mrs. Morrison, it was destroyed by fire in 1879, but rebuilt then and remained standing as a theatre to the present day.

The W. H. Yates Construction Company have been awarded the contract for the hotel and office buildings, \$15,000,00 being the proposed contract investment. Work commences early in January and the office building will cover the whole of the west side of the new street, from King to Adelaide, to be known as "Toronto Tower."

The Grand is now being vested of its historical associations, the various fittings turned over by Mrs. Theresa Small, wife of the missing magnate, to various charities.

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Double Feature Bills

Laurier, Hull, Que.

Double-featured programmes have found their way into the Laurier Theatre, Hull, Quebec, the manager of which is Donat Paquin. The double bills are presented on all days of the week except Wednesday and Thursday.

A recent typical schedule for the week was as follows: Sunday to Tuesday, inclusive—"The Unknown" and "The Gay Retreat;" Wednesday and Thursday—"Smiling Through;" Friday and Saturday—"The Dark Angel" and "Exit Smiling."

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THE MARK OF PERFECTION



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Christmas Performance Arranged By Showmen

Several leading exhibitors of Ottawa, Ontario, have made preliminary arrangements for Christmas specialties, these plans being laid in co-operation with local service clubs.

Joseph M. Franklin, manager of B. F. Keith's, has decided to hold a special performance Saturday morning, December 24, under the auspices of the Rotary Club of Ottawa, when the guests will be the crippled children of the city, who are under the care of the Rotarians. Poor children will also be invited. There will be a Santa Claus and small gifts will be distributed.

FBO's Grand February Jubilee Under Way

An FBO Picture in Every Theatre in the United States and England During February Jubilee Month

TO COMMEMORATE the second anniversary of the entrance of Joseph P. Kennedy, president of FBO Pictures Corporation, into the motion picture business, the month of February, 1928, will mark the commencement of a campaign by the company to strengthen the good-will that exists between the organization and motion picture devotees throughout the world.

The highlight of FBO's Grand February Jubilee will be a special drive by the sales force, already inaugurated, to place an FBO picture, either a special, a feature, or a short subject, in every theatre in the United States, Canada and England, sometime during the month of February.

A national advertising, publicity and exploitation campaign on the entire FBO product will be inaugurated before and during the month of February. Special press books, special paper and an entirely new line of accessories will be furnished exhibitors so that they make February a Jubilee Month for themselves, as well as for FBO.

Super Service Gas & Oil Give Theatre Tickets

When the Super Service Gas & Oil Company opened its downtown service station in Ottawa, Ontario, a free ticket for any one of three theatres was given as a souvenir to customers, the tickets being paid for by the company. The result was that there was a long line-up of automobiles at the gasoline establishment.

The tickets were for the Imperial Theatre, Ottawa; the Laurier Theatre, Hull, Quebec, or the Eden Theatre, also in Hull.

Toronto Theatres

UPTOWN — "Two Arabian Knights," with William Boyd, Mary Astor, and Louis Wolheim—United Artists.

TIVOLI — "The Somme," with an All Star Cast — British Regal release.

SHEA'S HIPPODROME — "Very Confidential," with Madge Bellamy — FOX.

LOEW'S — "The City Gone Wild," with Thomas Meighan, Paramount.

PANTAGES — "The Chinese Parrot," with Hobart Bosworth, Marion Nixon, and Edmund Burns—Universal.

Neighborhood Theatres

PALACE — "Beau Geste," with Ronald Colman, Norman Powell and Noah Beery—Paramount.

ST. CLAIR — "Woman on Trial," with Pola Negri—Paramount.

RUNNYMEDE — "Now We're in the Air," with Wallace Beery and Raymond Hatton—Paramount.

ALHAMBRA — "Woman on Trial," with Pola Negri — Paramount. "Rose of the Golden West," with Gilbert Roland and Mary Astor—First National.

PARKDALE — "Beau Geste," with Ronald Coleman, Norman Powell and Noah Beery—Paramount.

OAKWOOD — "Annie Laurie," with Lillian Gish and Norman Kerry—Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. "Beau Geste," with Ronald Coleman — Paramount.

BELSIZE — "Gentleman of Paris," with Adolphe Menjou—Paramount.

BLOOR — "Mockery," with Lon Chaney — Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. "Now We're in the Air," with Wallace Beery and Raymond Hatton—Paramount.

YORK — "Old San Francisco," with Dolores Costello—Warner.

Tom Terris Will Direct "Beyond London's Lights"

Tom Terris, English actor and American director, has been selected to direct "Beyond London's Lights," an adaptation of J. J. Bell's novel, "Kitty Carstairs," for FBO, according to an announcement by William Le Baron, vice-president in charge of production.

WANTED

To buy or lease moving picture theatre in live town. Must be sound proposition, and bear investigation. Reply to BOX 303, YARMOUTH, N.S.

Two Hundred and Ninety- Seven for Paramount

That motion picture makers at the Paramount studio in Hollywood will have a busy Christmas as well as a merry one was indicated as the sixth picture went into simultaneous production, eight were ordered to start within a month and nine were turned over to the titling and editing departments.

These twenty-three pictures, representing many millions of dollars of production value, are but little more than eight percent of the product that Paramount Famous Lasky will release this current year, it having 297 pictures on the release program for the 12 month period. These include short features as well as the big specials such as Harold Lloyd's "Speedy" Christie's "Tillie's Punctured Romance," and Fred Thomson's "The Pioneer Scout."

The six pictures now being made on Paramount's 26 acre lot and at the 2700 acre Paramount ranch are "The Last Command," starring Emil Jannings; "Under the Tonto Rim," a Zane Grey Western with Richard Arlen and Mary Brian in feature roles; "The Travelling Salesman," starring Richard Dix; "Doomsday," starring Florence Vidor; a new Esther Ralston starring picture and chief of them all, Anne Nichols' "Abie's Irish Rose," being directed by Victor Fleming.

The pictures going into immediate production are: "Red Hair," an Elinor Glyn story starring Clara Bow; a new Bebe Daniels farce comedy; "The Beauty Doctor," to star Adolphe Menjou; "Quick Lunch," to star W. C. Fields and Chester Conklin; "The Patriot," an Emil Jannings starring picture to be directed by Ernst Lubitsch; a Wallace Beery-Raymond Hatton comedy special; and the second Geo. Bancroft starring picture which will follow immediately a picture of the oil fields. A ninth on which is under way is a vehicle for Esther Ralston to follow her present untitled picture.

The nine pictures being cut and edited for release, all camera work having been completed on them, are: Erich von Stroheim's "The Wedding March," a Wallace Beery-Raymond Hatton comedy of Alpine locale for which a final title is being sought; "Beau Sabreur," companion picture to "Beau Geste;" "Two Flaming Youths," starring W. C. Fields and Chester Conklin; "The Gay Defender," starring Richard Dix; "Serenade," starring Adolphe Menjou; "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," the big special with the all-star cast; "The Secret Hour," starring Pola Negri and "The Legion of the Condemned," companion picture to "Wings."

American Film Producers Responsible for Drastic Legislation

American Producer's View on the Foreign Film Situation Gathered After a Three Months' First-Hand Survey in the Principal Producing Centers of the World.

Joe Brandt, President Columbia Pictures Corporation, Sizes Up Film Situation Abroad.

"AMERICAN PRODUCERS OF MOTION PICTURES have themselves to blame for a great deal of the drastic legislation that is now being enacted in various countries of Europe to hamper and limit the showing of American-made pictures."

This, in essence, is the reaction of Joe Brandt, President of Columbia Pictures Corporation, who has just returned to New York after a three month's business trip that took him to the principal cities of England and Europe in the interests of his company.

During his close contact with foreign film producers and distributors, Mr. Brandt had ample opportunity to gather at first-hand a great deal of valuable information and data having a direct bearing upon the growth and continued success of the American Motion Picture Industry in the foreign market.

Mr. Brandt's survey took him into England, France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia. His findings should prove of the utmost interest to all who are interested in the production and distribution of American-made pictures both in the United States and Abroad.

"The political situation in Europe, so far as the motion picture industry is concerned, is in a critical stage," states Mr. Brandt. "I am convinced that if American producers in the past had given a little more consideration to the interests of foreign producers, much of the adverse sentiment manifest in relation to American pictures today would be non-existent. It is preposterous for our producers to labor under the delusion that they can go on disregarding these foreign interests and continue to have things their own way for any great length of time.

"Just before I left England," continued Mr. Brandt, "the English Quota Bill, as it is known in this country, came up for final reading. After considerable discussion, certain amendments were taken out of the measure, but there were enough teeth left in it to make it a considerable source of inconvenience to the producer of American film.

"Probably the most far-reaching and revolutionary of the many drastic measures in the English bill are the elimination of block booking and the outlawing of all contracts which extend over a period of one year.

"While the elimination of block booking will undoubtedly work a great hardship upon the American producer, because of the objectionable activity on the part of English producers and the inclusion of English pictures in preference to American, in my opinion that part of the bill which makes it impossible to book pictures more than one year ahead, is much more severe. In operation, this clause will have the effect of throwing back on the English market a great number of American pictures which have already been contracted for showing. Until the thing finally solves itself, distribution of American product will be chaotic. The pictures which have thus been outlawed will all have to be resold on an individual basis.

"Naturally, this works out to the undoubted advantage of the British exhibitor. He has everything in his favor and can do as he pleases. The decision as to whether or not he desires to eliminate these pictures entirely from his program, or book such of them as he may see fit, rests solely with him. True, the law also

states that British pictures cannot be sold en bloc, but the political attitude, and particularly the support of the English papers in the controversy, creates a situation whereby English pictures, at least for the time being, will be booked more readily than American pictures. Under the bill, too, British exhibitors must book a certain proportion of British product in conjunction with American pictures, and the Government will insist upon the English theatre-owner living up to this proviso. Severe penalties have been imposed for the violation of these clauses.

"Both in the United States and in England there seems to be an impression in certain quarters that the Quota Bill will have the effect of forcing a great number of inferior British pictures upon the British market. With this belief I differ most strongly. Recent British productions which have been pre-viewed in London show a marked degree of improvement in quality over pictures formerly made in England. The belief that British-made pictures are absolutely worthless, as far as entertainment value is concerned, is no longer valid. British producers, let me point out, have been making wonderful strides forward in every branch of production.

"While the Quota Bill does give the British pictures industry preference as far as legislation is concerned, Parliament was not so much interested in protecting the home industry as it was in building up the industry for its ultimate political effect. British lawmakers are not blind to the far-reaching effects of motion pictures when used as a source of gentle propaganda.

"British enthusiasts were outspoken in their opinion that American pictures were educating the English public to American idioms, American slang, American methods of living, American jazz. They were quick to point out that the advertising of American-made products on the screen, and the continued showing of so large a proportion of American pictures in England, was gradually having a tendency to Americanize the British public. They also advanced as a strong argument in favor of a powerful British film industry the effect the showing of English pictures would have upon their colonies and possessions. The dissemination of

information about national industries and the spread of knowledge about the scenic beauties of England was being usurped in favor of the United States by preponderance of American pictures being thrown upon British screens.

"Parliament undoubtedly took all these things into consideration when it decided that protection must be accorded the British picture-making industry.

"The English press has been very bitter in its denunciation of certain American pictures, yet some of the English papers have pointed out that it is impossible to legislate good pictures upon the screen. 'The Daily Express,' published November 14th, at the time the Cinematograph Bill was being read in Parliament, accented this viewpoint in an editorial."

The editorial in question is as follows:

"The Cinematograph Bill comes up before Parliament this week. It is a strange measure, supposedly devised to put the British film industry on its feet, but wholly unlikely to do anything of the sort. Who on earth is going to see a British film at the dictation of the Government and merely because it is British? People do not visit the cinema just to please Whitehall or to be patriotic. They go to enjoy the pictures, and so long as the pictures unrolled before them have life and interest they do not care whether they originated at Neasden, Hollywood or Timbuctoo. Why should they? It is the quality of the entertainment provided and not its source or origin that appeals to them. But to the authors of this astonishing measure quality seems to be of no account. They think they can thrust British films compulsorily on the public whether the public wants them or not.

"There is one chance, and one only, for the British film and that is to become as good as, or better than, any of its foreign rivals. If it cannot win on its merits it can never win at all. The idea of compelling the production of a certain definite quota of British films in every picture house — of bringing in the nation and bureaucracy to do the work of the artist — is meddlesomeness run mad. It is not by such fussy strivings after an exclusive preserve of its own that Hollywood has won the sceptre of the film world. Hollywood reigns because it is free to levy on the talent of all nationalities. It does not worry about whether its actors and technicians are American or British (of whom it has many) or French, or whether this company or that is American 'controlled,' or whether the producers here and the directors there are citizens of the United States, or where the money comes from that finances its productions. That is the only way. British films must meet the universe in open competition, and let the universe judge of the results."

"Certainly, in pointing out that no picture should be excluded from England if it has entertainment value, and further, that no legislative body should force entertainment upon the public unless it is of the necessary quality to please the public, the sanity of this British paper's point of view is amply demonstrated," comments Mr. Brandt.

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Continuing, he states:

"The general impression of the trade in England seems to be that had American distributors shown the slightest tendency, or made even the most meager gesture of reciprocation, by taking a few of the British pictures into America for distribution, the Quota Bill would have remained in status quo. But when American distributors refused to consider seriously the manufacture of pictures in Great Britain or turned a deaf ear to the requests that British pictures be introduced to American audiences, British lawmakers took matters into their own hands and forced the issue, giving the much-needed protection to their own industry.

"They expect now that the crystallization of their action through the passage of the Quota Bill will compel American producers and distributors to make pictures in England and depict upon the screen English life, English homes, English surroundings and English people. In this way they hope to accomplish politically what they had failed to do diplomatically.

"So far as British exhibitors are concerned, they take the stand that while they are interested in helping and furthering a British motion picture industry, they are at the moment most anxious to put upon their screen pictures that will entertain, irrespective of the country of origin. British exhibitors, believe that the success of their business is based upon the approval of the public and the subsequent patronage which follows the showing of good pictures.

"One effect of the Quota Bill was almost as remarkable as it was immediate. Even before the bill had actually passed, several companies floated stock issues. Several of these were over-subscribed in spite of the fact that their prospectus plainly showed they had nothing tangible beyond the fact that they were going into business to manufacture pictures in accordance with the Quota Bill.

"Considerable surprise was manifest in business circles as well as film circles when one company in particular, which had absolutely no foundation, no producing organization, and but the flimsiest skeleton of a business organization, succeeded in getting from the 'City' (the Wall Street of England) a one million dollar subscription. This issue was over-subscribed, without one word of assurance that the public would ever get any sort of return from the money invested.

"Stock issue after stock issue is being prepared, offered, and gobbled up. This enthusiastic reaction is having one beneficial effect, at any rate, regardless of the heartaches that may eventually follow. Public cash is pouring into the coffers of many British film companies that heretofore have been cramped in their endeavors because of the lack of financial support.

"The same legislative activity that characterizes England is true more or less of other countries in Europe. The recent publication of the new quota law for Germany is another definite indication of the tightening of the lines against American pictures. The controlling interests of the U.F.A., just before I left Europe, were contemplating an amalgamation with Phoebus and Emelka, other large producers and owners of motion picture theatres. This combine has decided upon a policy through which it will

not only control the major part of the producing interests of Germany, but the theatre interests as well. This, in my opinion, is a definite move to try to block the attempt made by some American distributors to acquire control of German theatres, and thereby bring in American pictures.

"While France at the moment has not definitely put a quota bill upon its books, there is no doubt she will follow the example of other countries and insist upon its exhibitors showing French pictures in preference to American pictures. At present American pictures predominate in France. It is evident to me, from the number of pictures that French producers contemplate making this year (about 100 pictures), that France will before long be compelled to adopt some sort of legislative measure to protect its own industry.

"It surprised me to note that in spite of the fact that Germany a short time ago was the enemy of France and England, today pictures made by German producers are most acceptable in both France and England. I have seen German pictures upon the screens of the best houses in both England and France.

"The movement promulgated some time ago for the creation of an *entente cordiale* among Germany and England, as far as film production is concerned, is actually under way and in operation. Screen stars of the three nations are being interchanged, and distributors in these three nations are entering into deals whereby the cost of negative is divided by the distributors in the three countries so as to protect the investment and insure a profit irrespective of whether the pictures ever reach America or not.

"Germany in particular is today making pictures at a price. They get their negative cost out of Germany and Austria and Central Europe, and pile up a good profit when their pictures are distributed in France and in England. Under this system of production a great number of the pictures made are naturally of an inferior quality, yet so strong is the German nationalistic feeling that an admittedly poor German picture will get preference in booking over an American picture of a better grade.

"You can credit this situation primarily to the propaganda which is constantly appearing in the newspapers encouraging the public to patronize German pictures in preference to any others.

"This strong nationalistic feeling is fast becoming very apparent in England. Although British distributors admit that some of the pictures made by English producers heretofore have not been very strong, and probably were not up to the standard of American pictures, yet the public has supported these pictures to a sufficient extent to protect the investment of the producer and to encourage him to continue his activities. In this staunch public support we find the reason why some English producers have during the past year concentrated the greater part of their efforts on pictures that are of particular interest to the British people, such as "The Battle of the Falklands." However, the fact remains that plans are now under way for the production of better stories with better casts and the best possible directors, irrespective of whether they are Continental or British. The aim is to produce for the British market the best possible British pictures, in order to provide a definite number of quality pictures to take the place of American films.

"So much for the general phases of the film situation in these three major coun-

tries. Let me in passing say that Pittaluga of Italy is also sponsoring a movement whereby Italy will make more pictures in the future than it has in the past. I understand, also, that some pictures are to be made in Spain. Those of you who are familiar with the European industry know that for some time the Scandinavian situation has been in the hands of the Svenska trusts.

"It is interesting to note the production schedules contemplated by the various countries I have visited. The actual count, as far as I could get it, was that England for the season 1928-29 expects to make not less than 75 pictures and probably 100. Germany is expected to produce not less than 200 pictures, probably 250. The French contemplate making at least 100 pictures. The Soviet Government has increased the number of pictures to be made in Russia to 250. Italy will probably produce not less than 30. Austria figures on making 25 pictures. The Scandinavian interests will produce about 40.

"If the *entente cordiale* film policy works out in Europe, it can readily be seen that a sufficient number of foreign made pictures will be available to supply the theatres of Europe with most of their needs. Particularly will this be the case if legislation is enacted drastic enough to force American pictures off the screen.

"That the general situation in Europe will materially affect the American producer of motion pictures is evident. If European producers can obtain their financial strength by an interchange of distribution, the number of American pictures will gradually be cut down. As a consequence, it is elementary arithmetic to state that the income which American producers will enjoy from the distribution of their film abroad will dwindle in exact ratio to the spread and growth of the foreign industry.

"It astonished me to note how film propaganda spreads even among the smaller nations of Europe. While I was in Berlin I had occasion to talk to a German producer who had secured a contract from the Hungarian Government for the making of a picture. While this was to be a dramatic film, his instructions were to incorporate in it a great deal of the scenic beauty of the country and as many industrial views as could consistently be put into the production. Even in Czecho-Slovakia the government has under consideration the making of pictures to show as many countries as possible the activities, customs, scenery, etc., of Czecho-Slovakia.

"The same activities which prevail in America with regard to building better theatres is also evident throughout Europe. Theatre magnates have learned their lesson from America, and as fast as theatres are put up overtures are made to take them into a circuit. The idea of keeping as many theatres in one group as possible can be noticed in almost every territory of Europe. In fact, it is remarkable that even in a territory like Hungary the important theatres are under one control. This Hungarian circuit, I hear, is stretching out into Roumania to acquire theatre interests in that territory. Were it not for the fact that there is such a definite feeling of animosity toward Austria, I personally feel that Austrian theatres would long before this have been joined with theatre chains in Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia.

"Of course, it is generally known that Pittaluga controls all the important theatres in Italy, and a plan is now shaping up for Verdaguer to form a big circuit

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in Spain. The tendency, except in some of the larger theatres, is not to over-seat the towns. Foreign theatres are not built on the tremendous scale we build them in America. The European theatre man considers it better to have a more compact theatre, with a home-like atmosphere, than to have a massive structure which will compel him to look for super-attractions to fill the house.

"Several moves have been made by some of the larger American distributors to obtain a foothold in various European countries by acquiring theatre interests. There is a doubt in my mind as to whether this will solve any of their present problems. Correct talk seems to be that if American theatre interests do get a sufficient hold in European countries, the individual governments concerned will enact tax legislation that will prove burdensome to American capital so invested. Such legislation would have the effect of making a theatre owned by local interests a profit paying proposition, and discourage any attempt for outside interest in local theatre-ownership.

"In my opinion, the only way in which to circumvent the definite move to crowd American pictures off foreign screens, is for American interests to undertake the distribution of some of the best of the foreign-made pictures in the United States. This will have the effect of encouraging foreign producers and distributors, and cause them to feel that the tremendous amount of money which the American producer and distributor takes out of the foreign field is in a measure replaced by some of the money which foreign-made pictures will earn in America.

"This is far from being a theory with Columbia Pictures, for we have entered into reciprocal arrangements with foreign producers in England, France and Germany to distribute the best of their product in the United States.

"The attitude of American exhibitors toward such foreign product should be based on only one thing—**Showmanship**. If a foreign picture possesses all the elements that go to make for good entertainment, that should be the only basis to dictate whether it find a place on any theatre's program. Foreign pictures should be judged solely on their box-office value, regardless of the country of origin or the trademark of the producer.

"That the American film producer and distributor is apprehensive of the effect of the general legislative activity now prevalent throughout Europe is evidenced by the fact that First National is at the present time maintaining a definite producing organization in Germany. So is Universal. First National also has a unit working in England, and recently the Metro-Goldwyn Company entered into a co-operative contract for one picture that was manufactured in Great Britain. If the American producer will seriously consider maintaining regular production units in the principal countries of Europe where most of the foreign revenue has been derived to date, there is no doubt in my mind that a great deal of the drastic legislation which is on the books, and which is being proposed, will be softened materially.

"While the amount of money to be taken out of the foreign market may be curtailed, it will not be cut off to such an extent as to make itself felt if the American producer and distributor follows this suggestion of co-operation. If he puts his back against the wall and definitely decides that he will not toler-

ate the importation of foreign-made pictures into the United States, he will gain little. Witness the favored tariff clauses worked out by France in favor of Germany, her hereditary enemy, and against the United States, as retaliation for just such measures as these in other of our industrial activities. Much more will be gained by our film industry through the exhibition of a spirit of helpfulness in the distribution of worthwhile foreign film in this country, and the establishing of fixed production units in several of the more important foreign countries.

"Columbia Pictures' policy in the foreign field has always been looked upon with considerable favor. We have not attempted to open offices in Europe and have been satisfied to leave the distribution of our pictures in the hands of locally owned companies. As a result, these locally owned companies are re-investing their profits in the manufacture of local pictures. We are not considered interlopers, for foreign film men recognize that we are assisting them to build up their own industry."

While abroad, Mr. Brandt arranged to have Frederick Shoniger, who formerly represented FBO and Warner Brothers in Europe, act as exclusive foreign representative for Columbia Pictures. Mr. Shoniger has an expert knowledge of conditions in the foreign field. His duties will not only embrace the supervision of all sales in Europe, but he will serve as the point of contact between Columbia Pictures in America and the foreign field.

Mr. Brandt, in commenting on Mr. Shoniger's appointment said: "I consider this point of contact very important in view of the apparent necessity for a closer co-operation between the American independent producer and the foreign independent producer."

Mr. Shoniger is now negotiating for the inclusion of Columbia Pictures in the definite distribution programs of several large and important distributors in Germany, Austria and Hungary.

In France, Mr. Brandt renewed Columbia Pictures' contract with Mr. Jacques Haik for the distribution of his company's product in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Spain.

Serials Are Growing Very Popular in Ottawa

The growing popularity of film serials is indicated by announcements of managers regarding bookings of the chapter stories. Practically all neighborhood houses in Ottawa, Ontario, are now presenting serial pictures once more. Manager J. T. Moxley of the Francais Theatre opened with "Scotty of the Scouts" on November 28, the chapters to run every Monday and Tuesday.

"WILD GEESE" PLAYING AT "THE ROXY"

"Wild Geese," the Tiffany-Stahl production adapted for the screen by A. P. Younger from the popular novel by Martha Ostenso, the second woman to win the Nobel Prize, in addition to being selected by the National Board of Review for their photoplay guide of popular and entertaining films, was selected as the outstanding production of the month, and is now showing at "The Roxy," having its engagement advanced a week.

Russia and Canada Only Few Miles Apart Hollywood Changes Map of Geography.

Russia and Canada are but a few miles apart, according to Hollywood's best geographical data.

In Laurel Canyon, a beauty spot but a few miles from the film center a complete Cossack Village has been built and it is here that director George Hill is filming John Gilbert's newest starring vehicle, "The Cossacks." Almost the entire action of the story is laid in this village, which consists of well laid out streets with houses and church and tavern and even a gypsy camp. Alexander Toluboff, a Russian architect, built the town, and experts declare that it is correct to the most minute detail.

But a few miles up the road the Lucien Hubbard production, "Rose Marie," with Joan Crawford and James Murray is being filmed. Although the company made a location trip to the Yosemite Valley, some of the scenes are being taken at Las Turas Lake. The locale of the story is the north western part of Canada and the lake is an admirable location for many of the scenes. One street of the Canadian village has been built near the lake for other shots.

These two companies leave the studio every morning at the same hour. One enters a Russian village and the other goes on to Canada, yet, both are a few miles from Hollywood.

NINE FBO FEATURES PLAYED BROADWAY

"The Harvester," the ninth FBO film on Broadway within a period of nine weeks, played to capacity during its week run at the Hippodrome. It satisfied both New York critics and audience.

In commenting on the merits of the film, Harriette Underhill in the Herald Tribune enthused:

"We found 'The Harvester' and its cool, green apathy a delightful change from the stories about actresses, gilded cafes and rich persons. The forests, the skies, the waters, the placid harvester himself were balm to a soul . . . and the photography in the new picture is so superb that one can hear the winds sighing, feel their cool breath on a fevered brow and sniff the scent of the wild flowers as he basks in the sunshine. Orville Caldwell gives a fine performance as the easy-going harvester. If you have time, steal over to the Hippodrome, lie on the grass, bask in the sunshine and hear the purling brooks." "The Harvester" is a faithful transcription of Gene Stratton-Porter's novel.

Round About the Studios



"Flash, step lively," says Polly Moran, both are under Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer contracts.

Matt Taylor has been selected by William LeBaron to write the adaptation of Henry Irving Dodge's story, "Skinner's Big Idea" which Lynn Shores will direct for FBO.

Mr. Taylor was at one time in the publicity department in the FBO home office.

Adolphe Zukor, president of the Paramount Famous Lasky Corporation is in Hollywood now on his annual visit to the coast. He is inspecting the new Paramount studio which he had not seen since it was put in operation a year ago.

More than two hundred canoes and enough raw furs to represent the entire winter catch of a hundred Canadian trappers are used in one of the sequences of "Rose-Marie," Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's film adaptation of the famous musical comedy. Joan Crawford and James Murray have the principal romantic roles in this Lucien Hubbard production.

Production has started on Marie Prevost's latest DeMille starring film, "A Blonde for a Night," according to an announcement from William Siström, General Manager of the DeMille plant.

Robert Hill, Universal director, has just announced the completed cast for his new Universal feature, "Thoroughbreds."

The leading role will be played by Marian Nixon, with such well-known players as Richard Walling, David Torrence, Claire McDowell, Johnny Fox, George Siegmann, Sam de Grasse and Otis Harlan in the other principal roles.

Al Cooke and Kit Guard, those two other funny fellows, have completed their work in "Legionnaires in Paris," the rollicking comedy based on the recent American Legion convention in Paris, and are taking a short vacation from the FBO studios.

Lloyd Corrigan, scenarist responsible for several successful comedies starring Bebe Daniels and others, has just signed a new contract with Paramount.

Universal reports the arrival of the second Glenn Tryon feature comedy in the East. It is called "A Hero for a Night," and is said to be even better than that star's first Universal feature, "Painting the Town," now breaking records all over the country. The direction is by William Craft.

"Riders of the Dark," an original story by W. S. Van Dyke, who has made most of the Tim McCoy historical Westerns for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, will be McCoy's next starring vehicle. No announcement has been made yet as to director or supporting cast.

Hoot Gibson's latest vehicle, "The Wild West Show" was completed this week at Universal, it is announced by the Laemmle organization.

The supporting cast of "The Wild West Show" embraces such prominent players as Dorothy Gulliver, petite beauty of the "Collegians," with Allan Forrest, Monte Montague, Gale Henry, Roy Laidlaw, John Hall and the world famous serial acrobats, The Three DeGarros.

Idyllwild, located in the beautiful San Bernardino mountains of California, will be the scene of great motion picture activity for the next few weeks. Bob Steele, FBO western star, with others of his company, including Wallace Fox, director, left Hollywood for this spot to film exteriors for "Man in the Rough," their latest production. The cast includes Bob Steele, Marjorie King, Tom Lingham, William Norton Bailey, Jay Morley and others.

Hedda Hopper, who is a film mother much in demand, has just been called to the Paramount studio to play the part of Esther Ralston's mother in the star's latest picture. Miss Hopper was a mother in "The Drop Kick" and "The Whip Woman." Her latest picture for Paramount was Florence Vidor's "One Woman to Another," where she was a sophisticated and polished confidante to the star.



Can't understand why Mary Astor and Lloyd Hughes have "No Place To Go," can you? It's a First National.

Five pictures now are in Paramount's editorial rooms, being readied for release in the near future. They are Erich von Stroheim's "Wedding March," "Beau Sabreur," the companion piece to the prize-winning "Beau Geste," featuring Gary Cooper and Evelyn Brent; "Two Flaming Youths," the circus comedy starring W. C. Fields and Chester Conklin; "The Gay Defender," Richard Dix's most recently completed film, and "The Secret Hour," Pola Negri's latest picture which was known in production as "Beggars of Love."

Clarence Brown, who has just completed Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's ambitious picturization of Robert W. Service's story of the Klondike, "The Trail of '98," will direct Greta Garbo in her next starring vehicle, "Heat."

Johnny Morris, former vaudeville troupier who "clicked" with a bit given him in a recent Emil Jannings picture, has been given the part of a "bum" in the new Esther Ralston starring picture, it was just announced by Paramount.



Rin-Tin-Tin's next for Warner Bros. is "A Dog of the Regiment."



Tender scene from "Louisiana," starring Billie Dove and Gilbert Roland. It is a First National feature.



Joan Crawford, beautiful leading lady in Tim McCoy's next starring feature, "The Law of the Range," for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.



Virginia Brown Faire, appearing in Warner productions.



Micky McGuire, sure is a "tough kid." This scene is from No. 6 of the series, released through Greater FBO.



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Charming Eleanor Boardman, who's next for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is "The Crowd," directed by King Vidor.



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